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THANOS:
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STARLIN
MILGROM
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THANOS

WARLOCK

GAMORA

MOONDRAGON

PIP

ATLEZ

>PREVIOUSLY IN INFINITY ABYSS...

Both Thanos and his one-time ward Gamora were targeted assassination by a cadre of strange variant duplicates of the mad Titan. Making her way to the true Thanos' stronghold, Gamora watches as Thanos now prepares to reveal the origin of those who assaulted them.

After two years spent in hibernation, Adam Warlock, Thanos' arch-nemesis, has been revived by a bogus Thanos and Pip the Troll. This variant Thanos sets Warlock on a quest to discover the identity of a mysterious cosmic being known as Atlez.

Earth-based heroes Captain Marvel, Spider-Man, and Doctor Strange have all become aware of a mystery that threatens the universe--bizarro cubes of nothingness that appear seemingly at random. One such cube has already swallowed up the mighty Defenders.

The powerful telepath Moondragon has become a mind-thrall of the Thanos-doppelganger known as X.

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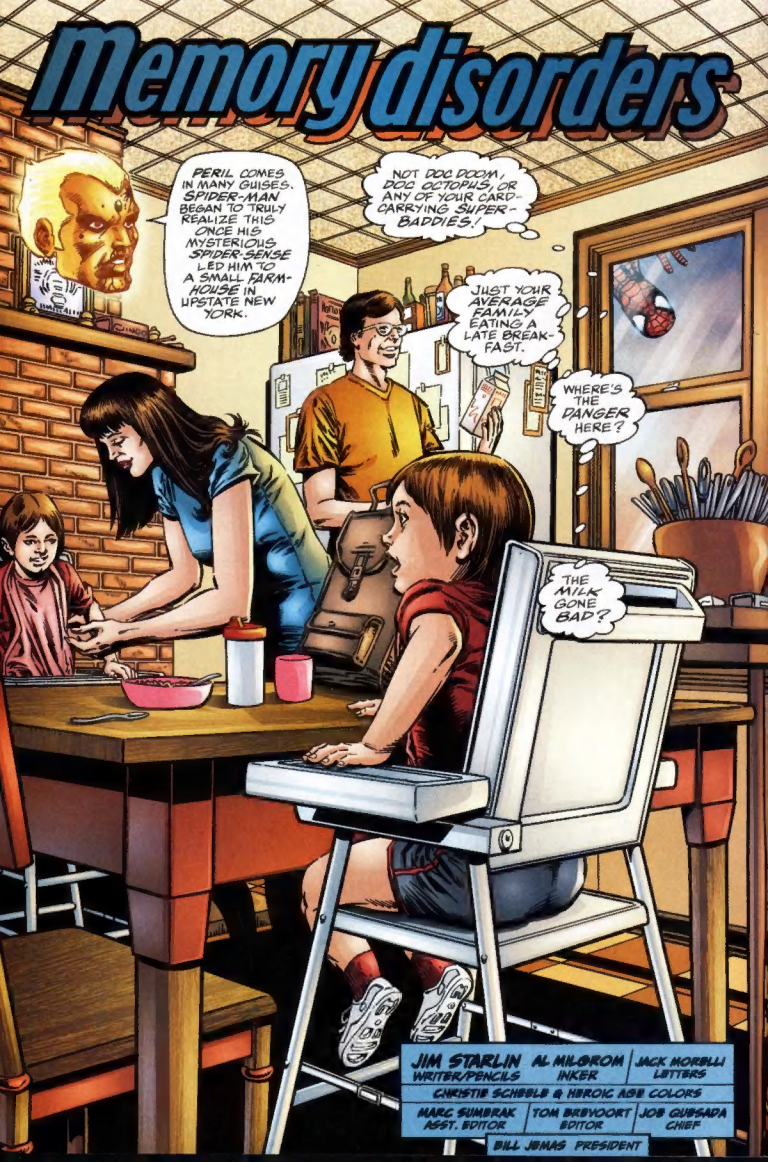
Memory disorders
PERIL COMES IN MANY GUISES. SPIDER-MAN BEGAN TO TRULY REALIZE THIS ONCE HIS MYSTERIOUS SPIDER-SENSE LED HIM TO A SMALL FARM-HOUSE IN UPSTATE NEW YORK.
NOT DOC DOOM, DOC OCTOPUS, OR ANY OF YOUR CARD-CARRYING SUPER-BADDIES.
JUST YOUR AVERAGE FAMILY EATING A LATE BREAK-FAST.
WHERE'S THE DANGER HERE?
THE MILK GONE BAD?
JIM STARLIN WRITER/PENCILS
AL MILGROM INKER
JACK MORELLI LETTERS
CHRISTIE SCHEELE & HEROIC AGE COLORS
MARC SUMERAK ASST. EDITOR
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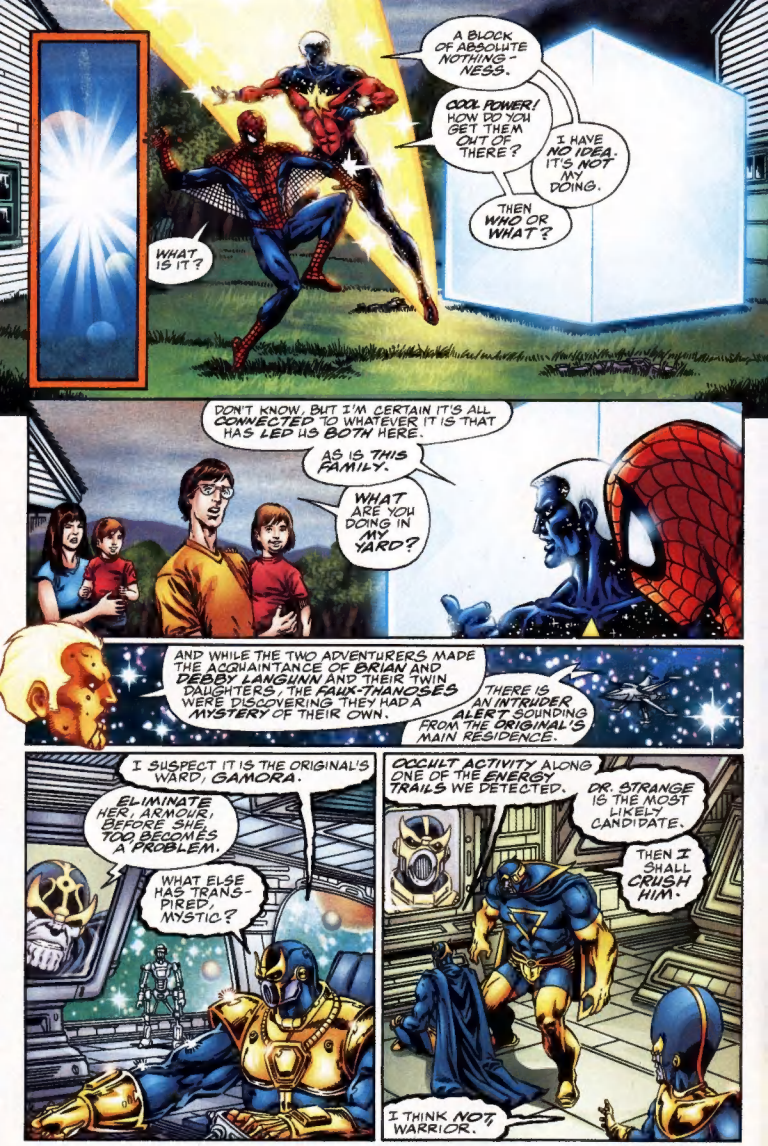
THEN AGAIN, MAYBE YOU'RE JUST GAPING IN THE WRONG DIRECTION, SPIDEY!
LOOKS LIKE A BUNCH OF ALIENS TELEPORTING INTO THE BACKYARD.
NOW THAT'S SOMETHING YOU DON'T SEE EVERY DAY.
GOOD GUYS OR BAD?
DEFINITELY BAD.
LORD, I HATE DEALING WITH ALIENS!
ALWAYS FEEL OUT OF MY WEIGHT CLASS WITH THEM.
PLUS YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT THEY'RE REALLY AFTER.
GIVE ME A GOOD OL' SUPER-VILLAIN FROM EARTH ANY DAY!
WITH THEM IT'S ALWAYS EITHER MONEY, POWER, OR REVENGE.

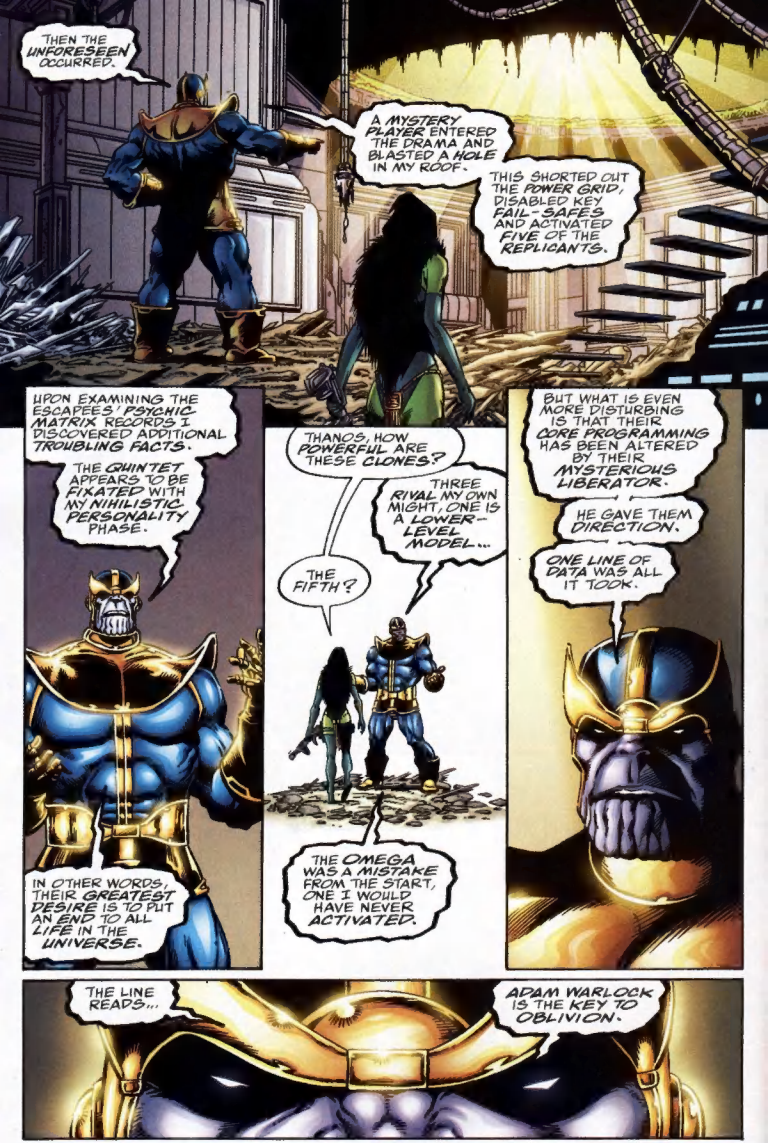
THING IS, THOUGH, THESE OFF-WORLD TYPES ARE DEFINITELY NOT WHAT SET OFF MY SPIDER-SENSE.
THEY CLEARLY AIN'T THE A-TEAM. NO THREAT TO ME.
BUT SOMETHING'S ONCE AGAIN SETTING OFF THE BELLS AND WHISTLES.
THERE'S DANGER... BUT COMING FROM WHERE?
SORRY TO INTERRUPT YOUR WORKOUT, SPIDER-MAN... BUT YOU'LL THANK ME...
CAPTAIN MARVEL!
IN CASE YOU DIDN'T NOTICE, I WAS WINNING THAT ROUND!
THAT IS ALL ABOUT TO CHANGE.
WATCH.
MY COSMIC SENSES WARNED ME THIS WAS ABOUT TO HAPPEN.
SPATIAL DISRUPTION, I THINK.
COSMIC SENSES?


WHAT IS IT?
A BLOCK OF ABSOLUTE NOTHING-NESS.
COOL POWER! HOW DO YOU GET THEM OUT OF THERE?
I HAVE NO IDEA. IT'S NOT MY DOING.
THEN WHO OR WHAT?
DON'T KNOW, BUT I'M CERTAIN IT'S ALL CONNECTED TO WHATEVER IT IS THAT HAS LED US BOTH HERE.
AS IS THIS FAMILY.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN MY YARD?
AND WHILE THE TWO ADVENTURERS MADE THE ACQUAINTANCE OF BRIAN AND DEBBY LANGUNN AND THEIR TWIN DAUGHTERS, THE FALK-THANOSES WERE DISCOVERING THEY HAD A MYSTERY OF THEIR OWN.
THERE IS AN INTRUDER ALERT SOUNDING FROM THE ORIGINAL'S MAIN RESIDENCE.
I SUSPECT IT IS THE ORIGINAL'S WARD, GAMORA.
ELIMINATE HER, ARMOUR, BEFORE SHE TOO BECOMES A PROBLEM.
WHAT ELSE HAS TRANSPIRED, MYSTIC?
OCCULT ACTIVITY ALONG ONE OF THE ENERGY TRAILS WE DETECTED.
DR. STRANGE IS THE MOST LIKELY CANDIDATE.
THEN I SHALL CRUSH HIM.
I THINK NOT, WARRIOR.

THIS IS AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO TEST THE NEWEST MEMBER OF OUR NIHILIST CRUSADE.
OUR HIGH PRIESTESS OF OBLIVION, THE RECENTLY CONVERTED MOON-DRAGON.
X, SHE'S NOTHING BUT YOUR PET PSYCHIC SLAVE.
TRUE. BUT WITH THE MYSTIC'S AID SHE SHALL PUT AN END TO DR. STRANGE'S INTERFERENCE.
GO FORTH, AND ENLIGHTEN THE NON-BELIEVER, MY CHILD.
AS YOU COMMAND, MASTER X.
AND BACK AT THE ORIGINAL'S HIDEAWAY...
ONE OF THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY APPEARS TO BE A BIGGIE.
TELL ME A STORY, THANOS, LIKE WHEN I WAS A CHILD.

I REALIZED, AFTER FORSAKING MY QUEST FOR DEATH'S AFFECTIONS AND TOTAL DOMINATION OF THE UNIVERSE, THAT I STILL HAD TO LIVE IN THIS UNIVERSE.
OVER AN EXTENDED LIFETIME I HAVE MADE MORE THAN MY FAIR SHARE OF ENEMIES.
PLUS, LIFE ITSELF IS A DANGEROUS ENTERPRISE IN WHICH ONE MIGHT HAVE NEED FOR TRUSTED ALLIES.
I DETERMINED TO TEST THE STRENGTH AND RELIABILITY OF SEVERAL PROBABLE FOES AND POSSIBLE COMRADES.
ABOUT THREE CENTURIES BEFORE YOUR BIRTH.
THE FIRST TEST INVOLVED KA-ZAR AND A LOW-LEVEL MODEL THAT PROVED NEEDLESSLY DESTRUCTIVE.
THAT ASPECT OF THE PROJECT DID NOT WORRY ME OVERMUCH UNTIL I SET A HIGHER-POWERED MODEL AGAINST THOR AND IT RAN COMPLETELY OUT OF CONTROL.
MILLIONS WERE KILLED.
IS THAT WHEN YOU WERE SUPPOSEDLY SLAIN BY THE THUNDER GOD?
YOU HEARD OF THE ASGARDIANS' GREAT VICTORY? HE IS QUITE PROUD OF IT, YOU KNOW.
BUT THE FINAL FIASCO ONCE AGAIN INVOLVED THOR AND HIS FELLOW AVENGERS, AND CLEARLY ILLUSTRATED THE PROJECT'S FAILURE.

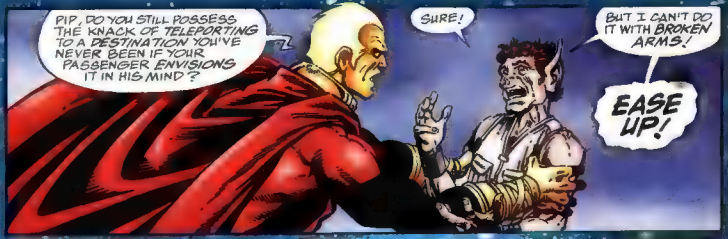
SO I SET ABOUT CREATING MY CHILDREN.
THEY ARE MY OWN UNIQUE BLEND OF ANDROID, CLONE, AND MYSTICAL DOPPELGANGER.
WHAT ARE THEY, CLONES?
WHEN DID YOU START DABBLING IN THE OCCULT?
WHAT AILED YOUR KIDS?
AN INTELLECTUAL DEFICIENCY.
THEY ALWAYS OPTED FOR THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE ANSWER TO ANY PROBLEM.
ANY FORM OF SUBTLE LOGIC SEEMED BEYOND THEM AND, OF COURSE, THEIR DESTRUCTIVE SHORTCOMINGS MADE ME LEGIONS OF NEW ENEMIES.
TOO DANGEROUS AND UNPREDICTABLE TO USE EVEN UNDER SUPERVISION, THEY WERE SCHEDULED FOR RECYCLING.
AND THEN?


THEN THE UNFORESEEN OCCURRED.
A MYSTERY PLAYER ENTERED THE DRAMA AND BLASTED A HOLE IN MY ROOF.
THIS SHORTED OUT THE POWER GRID, DISABLED KEY FAIL-SAFES AND ACTIVATED FIVE OF THE REPLICANTS.
UPON EXAMINING THE ESCAPEES' PSYCHIC MATRIX RECORDS I DISCOVERED ADDITIONAL TROUBLING FACTS.
THE QUINTET APPEARS TO BE FIXATED WITH MY NIHILISTIC PERSONALITY PHASE.
IN OTHER WORDS, THEIR GREATEST DESIRE IS TO PUT AN END TO ALL LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE.
THANOS, HOW POWERFUL ARE THESE CLONES?
THREE RIVAL MY OWN MIGHT, ONE IS A LOWER-LEVEL MODEL...
THE FIFTH?
THE OMEGA WAS A MISTAKE FROM THE START, ONE I WOULD HAVE NEVER ACTIVATED.
BUT WHAT IS EVEN MORE DISTURBING IS THAT THEIR CORE PROGRAMMING HAS BEEN ALTERED BY THEIR MYSTERIOUS LIBERATOR.
HE GAVE THEM DIRECTION.
ONE LINE OF DATA WAS ALL IT TOOK.
THE LINE READS...
ADAM WARLOCK IS THE KEY TO OBLIVION.

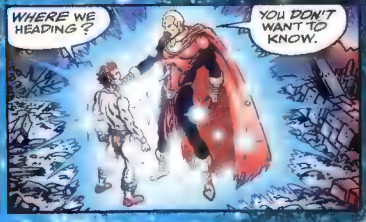
AND ON ANOTHER PLANE OF EXISTENCE, AS OBLIVIOUS AS I TO THE TRUE SCOPE OF THE DANGER WE FACED, DR. STRANGE CONTINUED FOLLOWING THE ENERGY TRAIL HE'D STUMBLED UPON.
WHAT'S THIS?
I SENSE OCCULT ACTIVITIES AT PLAY!
ANOTHER MYSTIC NEARBY?
YES!
NO.
YOU!
HOW DID YOU GET--
QUESTIONS FROM A DEAD MAN ARE OF NO IMPORT. ONLY RESULTS MATTER!
HAIL TO THE COMING OBLIVION!
DESPITE ITS NAME, MONSTER ISLAND WAS THE CLOSEST I EVER CAME TO HAVING A HOME.
THE SIGHT OF THOSE RUINS SADDENED BOTH PIP AND ME.

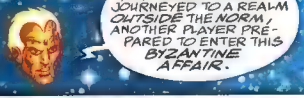
WHAT A MESS!
WONDER IF ANYTHING IN THE WINE CELLAR SURVIVED?
COMING HERE HAS DONE NOTHING TO REVEAL ATLEZ'S IDENTITY.
STILL DRAWING A BLANK, HUH?
HE WAS BEGGING FOR MY HELP...
SAY, ADAM, WHY'D YOU LOSE THE ROMAN CENTURION LOOK?
YOUR NEW TAILOR LEAVES A LOT TO BE DESIRED.
I AM NOT WHAT I WAS.
I HAVE CHANGED.
INTO WHAT I AM NOT YET CERTAIN.
YOU'LL LET ME KNOW ONCE YOU FIND OUT?
OF COURSE. WHAT DO YOU CARRY IN ALL THOSE POCKETS?
JUST YOUR BASICS.
CIGARS AND EXPLOSIVES.
THIS IS WHAT I HAVE ALWAYS FOUND COMFORTING ABOUT YOU, PIP.
YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOU WANT.
EVEN IF IT MAKES NO SENSE WHATSOEVER.
THANKS. I THINK.

YOU JUST HAVE TO KNOW HOW TO ENJOY LIFE.
YOUR GIFT. NOT MINE.
I WAS BORN IN, LIVED MY ENTIRE EXISTENCE IN, AND SEVERAL TIMES DIED AMIDST CONFLICT.
WITHOUT EVER TRULY KNOWING WHY.
YOU ABOUT TO GO INTO ONE OF YOUR WHAT'S THE MEANING OF LIFE RANTS?
PERHAPS...
DON'T!
THE UNIVERSE OCCASIONALLY NEEDS A HERO TO PULL ITS FAT OUT OF THE COSMIC FIRES.
THAT'S YOUR JOB.
SO DEATH AND RESURRECTION ARE ALL I HAVE TO LOOK FORWARD TO?
MAYBE IF YOU TRIED TO LIGHTEN UP A BIT.
A LAUGHING ETERNAL WARRIOR? I FIND THAT HARD TO VISUALIZE.
ALL RIGHT, THEN ANSWER ME THIS: WHEN ATLEZ CALLED TO YOU...
...WAS HE FAR AWAY OR NEARBY?
I HADN'T THOUGHT OF THAT.
FAR AWAY.
BEYOND INFINITY.
BEYOND...
OF COURSE!
ETERNITY!


PIP, DO YOU STILL POSSESS THE KNACK OF TELEPORTING TO A DESTINATION YOU'VE NEVER BEEN IF YOUR PASSENGER ENVISIONS IT IN HIS MIND?
SURE!
BUT I CAN'T DO IT WITH BROKEN ARMS!
EASE UP!

MY APOLOGIES.
LET US BE OFF!
OKAY.


WHERE WE HEADING?
YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW.


AND WHILE PIP AND I JOURNEYED TO A REALM OUTSIDE THE NORM, ANOTHER PLAYER PREPARED TO ENTER THIS BYZANTINE AFFAIR.

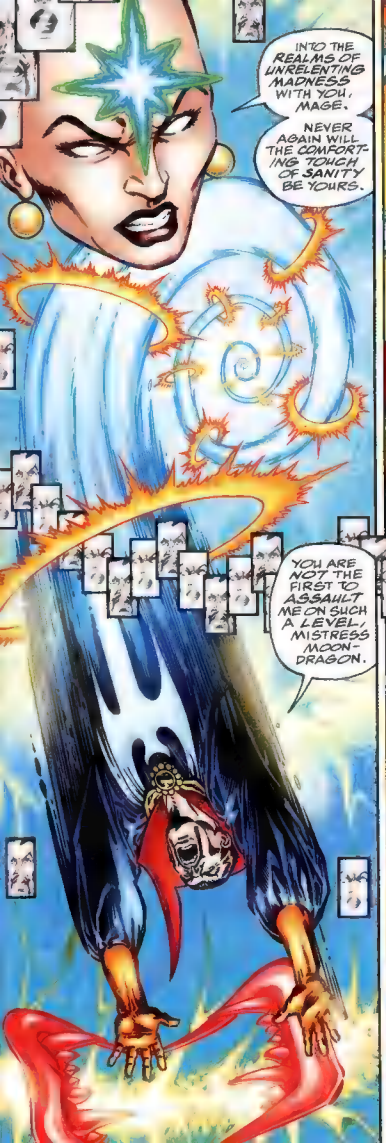
FIRST, AN OVERPOWERING HUNGER HAD TO BE SATISFIED.
IT WAS THE THIRD WORLD TO DIE WITHIN THE KREE EMPIRE.
MILLIONS OF SOULS PERISHED WITH THEIR HOMES.
THIS SACRIFICE WAS REQUIRED TO EMPOWER THE PLAYER.
TO HIM, THE COST WAS NOTHING.
ONLY THE HUNGER AND HIS ULTIMATE GOAL MATTERED.

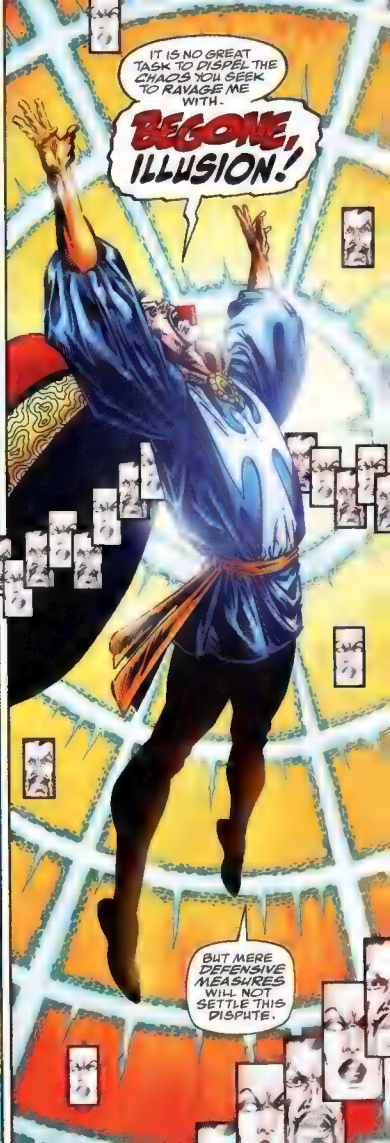
THE REPLICANT X WAS DESIGNED TO TEST THE EARTH MUTANT PROF. X'S TELEPATHIC MIGHT.
WARRIOR TO DETERMINE THE ABILITIES OF THE SHI'AR GUARDIAN GLADIATOR.
OF COURSE MYSTIC WAS MEANT FOR DR. STRANGE.
AND ARMOHR, A THIRD LEVEL REPLICANT, FOR IRON MAN.
AND THE ONE YOU CALLED OMEGA?
WHAT'S THAT?
THE INTRUDER ALERT.
MORE UN-ANTICIPATED COMPANY.
IT IS THE REPLICANT ARMOHR, PROBABLY INVESTI-GATING YOUR TRESPASS.
YOU WILL HAVE TO DEAL WITH HIM.
WHY SHOULD I DO YOUR DIRTY WORK?
BECAUSE SAVING THE UNIVERSE FROM OBLIVION WILL BE NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE IF THE CLONES LEARN I STILL LIVE.
I'M NO MATCH FOR HIM.
YOU NEED ONLY LURE HIM TO LEVEL 34, WHERE A TELE-PORTATION GATE WILL WHISK YOU TO SAFETY.
I SHALL HANDLE THE ACTUAL DISPOSAL.
OKAY.

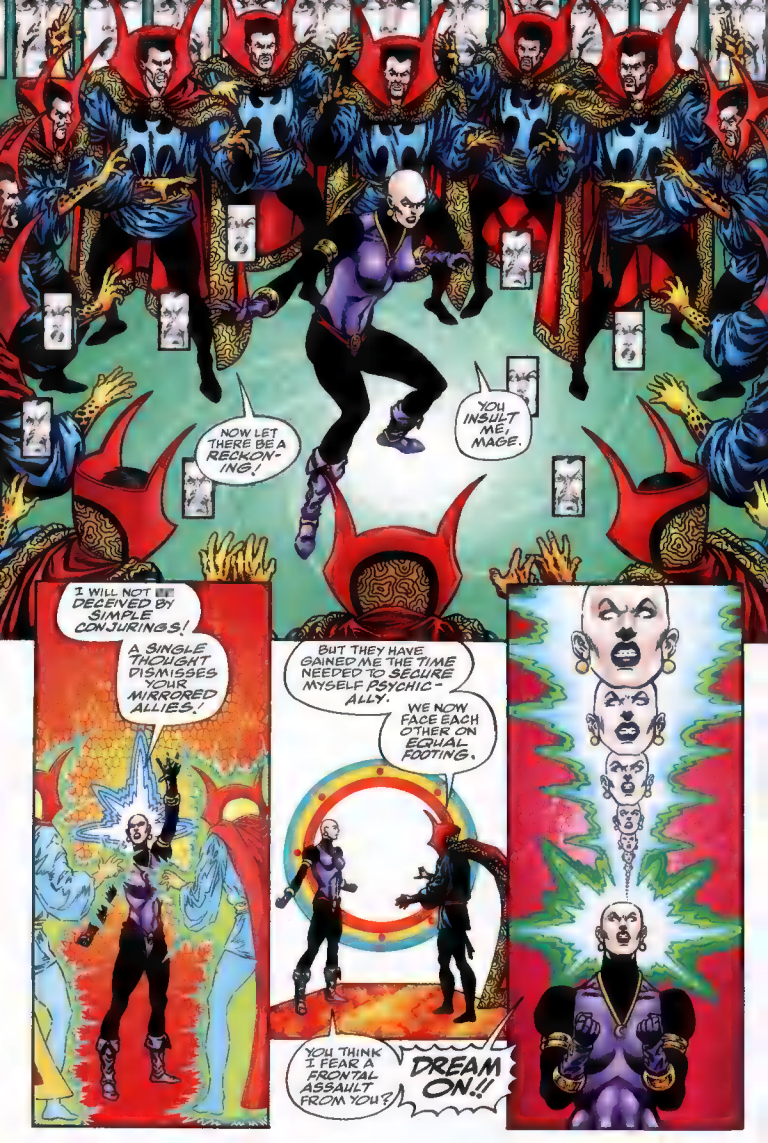
BUT IF I REACH THAT SUB-BASEMENT, AND--
YOU FEAR BETRAYAL?
IT WOULDN'T BE THE FIRST TIME.
TRUE. SO IT IS REASSURANCE YOU SEEK.
A LITTLE TRUST.
YOU HAVE NOW BECOME AN INTRICATE FACTOR ■ MY PLANS.
GOOD ENOUGH.
GAMORA, YOU HAVE EXACTLY 10 MINUTES TO LEAD THE REPLICANT TO S4.
AND IF I DON'T MEET YOUR DEAD-LINE?
I WOULD HATE TO HAVE TO SACRIFICE THIS ENTIRE STRUCTURE TO RID MYSELF OF THAT IRON-CLAD NUISANCE.
TYPICAL THANOS.
MY BEING INSIDE THIS STRUCTURE DOESN'T MERIT EVEN MENTIONING.
THE DOPPELGANGER APPROACHES.
MY PREY.
WITHIN HIM THE ESSENCE OF THE MAN WHO RAISED ME.
KIN?
FATHER?
NO.
TARGET.

THIS IS A MAD GAME YOU PLAY, MOONDRAGON.
YOU MEDDLE IN DIRE MATTERS BEYOND YOUR COMPREHENSION.
SO YOU ARE ANOTHER'S THRALL?
I AM SHE WHO WILL BE ANSWERED.
RESIST ME NOT!
OR I SHALL PICK WHAT I CRAVE FROM THE RUINS OF YOUR MIND.
PSYCHIC TORTURE?
YOUR CHOICE, STRANGE.
MOON-DRAGON, EVEN WHEN A DEFENDER...
...YOU NEVER TRULY APPRECIATED THAT THE MYSTIC ARTS ARE FIRST AND FOREMOST A MENTAL DISCIPLINE.
I UNDERSTAND THIS AFFAIR BETTER THAN YOU, MYSTIC.
MY MASTER WOULD KNOW WHAT LITTLE YOU HAVE GLEANED.

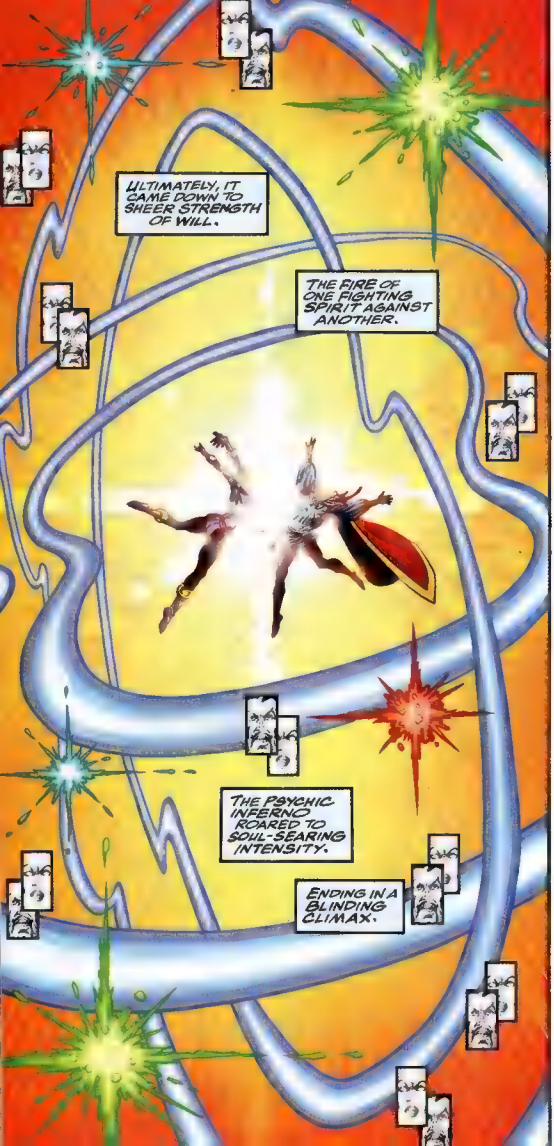
FOR THE MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS THE LINE BETWEEN REALITY AND PSYCHIC ILLUSION IS WELL DEFINED.
DISPELLING EVEN A MASTERFULLY INDUCED FALSE PERCEPTION IS A SIMPLE MATTER.
THEN YOU FORCE ME TO MORE BRUTAL, MIND-DAMAGING METHODS, MYSTIC.
I HAD HOPED, AFTER EXTRACTING THE INTELLIGENCE I SEEK, TO RECRUIT YOU TO THE CAUSE.
THEN IT IS YOU WHO LIVE IN FANTASY.
I CLEARLY SEE THAT NOW.
SO EXPECT NO MERCY.


INTO THE REALMS OF UNRELENTING MADNESS WITH YOU, MAGE.
NEVER AGAIN WILL THE COMFORTING TOUCH OF SANITY BE YOURS.
YOU ARE NOT THE FIRST TO ASSAULT ME ON SUCH A LEVEL, MISTRESS MOON-DRAGON.


IT IS NO GREAT TASK TO DISPEL THE CHAOS YOU SEEK TO RAVAGE ME WITH.
BEGONE, ILLUSION!
BUT MERE DEFENSIVE MEASURES WILL NOT SETTLE THIS DISPUTE.


NOW LET THERE BE A RECKONING!
YOU INSULT ME, MAGE.
I WILL NOT BE DECEIVED BY SIMPLE CONJURINGS!
A SINGLE THOUGHT DISMISSES YOUR MIRRORED ALLIES.!
BUT THEY HAVE GAINED ME THE TIME NEEDED TO SECURE MYSELF PSYCHIC-ALLY.
WE NOW FACE EACH OTHER ON EQUAL FOOTING.
YOU THINK I FEAR A FRONTAL ASSAULT FROM YOU?
DREAM ON.!!

IDENTITY'S FOUNDATION WAS THE INTENDED GROUND ZERO IN THIS PSYCHIC BOMBARDMENT.
BOTH COMBATANTS DESPERATELY SUMMONED MEMORY AS THEIR PRIMARY LINE OF DEFENSE.
BUT, AS THE BATTLE RAGED ON, EVEN THESE SAFEGUARDS PROVED INSUFFICIENT.
THEIR SELVES, REFLECTED IN THE EYES OF THOSE DEAREST TO THEM, ANCHORED THEIR RESPECTIVE SOULS.


ULTIMATELY, IT CAME DOWN TO SHEER STRENGTH OF WILL.
THE FIRE OF ONE FIGHTING SPIRIT AGAINST ANOTHER.
THE PSYCHIC INFERNO ROARED TO SOUL-SEARING INTENSITY.
ENDING IN A BLINDING CLIMAX.

ONE THE VICTOR.
ONE THE VANQUISHED.

LONG YEARS OF OCCULT STUDY AND CONDITIONING GAINED STRANGE HIS TRIUMPH.
HIS SOUL GROUNDED ALMOST TO THE POINT OF BEING AN ASTRAL CONSTANT.
THIS DAY HE WELL EARNED THE TITLE OF MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS.
BUT AS WITH ALL GREAT VICTORIES...
THERE WAS A COST TO BE PAID...
MEANWHILE, PIP AND I HAD FINALLY REACHED OUR DESTINATION, MUCH TO MY COMPANION'S DISMAY...
THAT'S THE LAST TIME I LET YOU DRIVE.
EVERY TIME YOU TAKE THE WHEEL WE END UP EITHER IN HELL, DEATH'S DOMAIN, OR SOME OTHER PLACE AND SITUATION WHERE WE DON'T BELONG.
QUIET, PIP. THIS MAKES NO SENSE.
ETERNITY AND INFINITY ARE THE EPONYMOUS PERSONIFICATIONS OF ALL TIME AND SPACE.
THEY ARE DIFFERENT SIDES OF THE SAME COIN.
IT IS INDEED RARE TO SEE THEM SIMULTANEOUSLY.
BUT TO FIND THEM LIKE THIS...

ADAM WARLOCK, WHY DO YOU LINGER?
AND WHY DID WE NOT NOTICE YOUR LITTLE FRIEND BEFORE?
YOU ARE BECOMING AN ANNOYANCE!
HAVE THE HEAVENS THEMSELVES BECOME DERANGED?
WHAT CAN THIS MEAN?
THAT'S EASY TO ANSWER.
THINGS HAVE OBVIOUSLY JUST GONE FROM EXTREMELY BAD TO UNBELIEVABLY WORSE.

TIME AND SPACE BEGIN TO DETERIORATE.
THE MESSENGER DRAWS NEAR.
BUT HE IS SO DAMAGED.
AND THE FORCES OF OBLIVION...
THEY TOO APPROACH.
AND THEY ARE SO POWERFUL.
PERHAPS INVINCIBLE.
TO BE CONTINUED

I REALIZED, AFTER FORSAKING MY QUEST FOR DEATH'S AFFECTIONS AND TOTAL DOMINATION OF THE UNIVERSE, THAT I STILL HAD TO LIVE IN THIS UNIVERSE.
OVER AN EXTENDED LIFETIME I HAVE MADE MORE THAN MY FAIR SHARE OF ENEMIES.
PLUS, LIFE ITSELF IS A DANGEROUS ENTERPRISE IN WHICH ONE MIGHT HAVE NEED FOR TRUSTED ALLIES.
I DETERMINED TO TEST THE STRENGTH AND RELIABILITY OF SEVERAL PROBABLE FOES AND POSSIBLE COMRADES.
SO I SET ABOUT CREATING MY CHILDREN.
WHAT ARE THEY, CLONES?
THEY ARE MY OWN UNIQUE BLEND OF ANDROID, CLONE, AND MYSTICAL DOPPELGANGER.
WHEN DID YOU START DABBLING IN THE OCCULT?
ABOUT THREE CENTURIES BEFORE YOUR BIRTH.
THE FIRST TEST INVOLVED KA-ZAR AND A LOW-LEVEL MODEL THAT PROVED NEEDLESSLY DESTRUCTIVE.
THAT ASPECT OF THE PROJECT DID NOT WORRY ME OVERMUCH UNTIL I SET A HIGHER-POWERED MODEL AGAINST THOR AND IT RAN COMPLETELY OUT OF CONTROL.
MILLIONS WERE KILLED.
IS THAT WHEN YOU WERE SUPPOSEDLY SLAIN BY THE THUNDER GOD?
YOU HEARD OF THE ASGARDIAN'S GREAT VICTORY? HE IS QUITE PROUD OF IT, YOU KNOW.
BUT THE FINAL FIASCO ONCE AGAIN INVOLVED THOR AND HIS FELLOW AVENGERS, AND CLEARLY ILLUSTRATED THE PROJECT'S FAILURE.
WHAT AILED YOUR KIDS?
AN INTELLECTUAL DEFICIENCY.
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ANY FORM OF SUBTLE LOGIC SEEMED BEYOND THEM AND, OF COURSE, THEIR DESTRUCTIVE SHORTCOMINGS MADE ME LEGIONS OF NEW ENEMIES.
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